

5

Where Have All the Voters Gone?

Presidential elections in America have undergone major transformations since 1960. We will explore some of these transformations: the decline in turnout (barely half of all Americans cast a vote for President), the prevalence since 1968 of Republican Presidents and Democratic Congresses, and the increased influence of the media, at the expense of political parties, over election results. We will also talk about some of the major issues and events in the 1992 Presidential campaign, and the recollections of participants in the course about previous Presidential elections.

Eric Davis, Professor of Political Science, has been a member of the Middlebury faculty since 1980. He teaches courses on Congress, the Presidency, and Presidential elections. His research interests include legislative-executive relations, with particular emphasis on civil rights laws.



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August 26-30, 1992

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The cost—covering 12 meals, four nights of lodging at Bread Loaf, tuition and books—is \$360/person, or \$720/couple.

The cost for younger alumni—classes '77-'92—is \$325/person, or \$650/couple. Fee includes non-refundable deposit of \$50/person. Recreational opportunities include tennis, swimming, hiking and golf (greens fees additional).

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We hope you'll consider joining us at Bread Loaf August 26-30, with other Middlebury alumni, parents and friends, for the seventeenth edition of Middlebury's Alumni College.

1

Against All Odds: Lotteries, Stock Markets, Air Traffic Safety and Beyond

With no formal math prerequisite, this course will focus on serious applications of probability and statistics from current news stories, developing mathematical concepts only so far as needed to understand these topics. What exactly is meant by the "margin of sampling error" in a public opinion poll? Can the accuracy of the U.S. census be improved by "statistical adjustments"? How surprised should we be by the story of the woman who won the New Jersey state lottery twice in four months? Can you really beat the mutual funds by throwing darts at the stock pages? Is it safer to drive than to fly? Along the way, we will examine and debunk some common fallacies in human statistical reasoning.

Bill Peterson, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, joined the Middlebury faculty in 1989. Prior to that, he worked for Palladin Software in Cambridge, Mass., where he developed probability models for an "expert systems" product designed to support manufacturing decisions. He received his A.B. in math at Dartmouth College in 1979, an M.S. in statistics at Stanford University in 1985, and a Ph.D. in operations research at Stanford University in 1985. Bill's research interests lie in probability theory and its applications.

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2

The Once and Twice Born Soul: William James Looks at Religion

Why do some people seem to be naturally religious; others to doubt? Why are some religious believers so sunny and optimistic; others so quick to find sin and despair? Questions like these form the backbone to William James' classic work, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Written at the turn of the century, James explores religious belief and emotion with the tools of the newly-emerging science of psychology. His study made famous the psychological diagnosis of the "once and twice born soul" and laid out his definition of "American pragmatism." A beautiful writer, James is a delight to read and a provocative companion in the study of religion.

Kate Sonderegger joined the Middlebury faculty in 1987 and is now Assistant Professor of Religion at the College. Raised in the Upper Midwest, Kate came to the East coast for college and graduate school and is now a transplanted Easterner. Her principal field of research and teaching is Western religious thought, focusing on Christianity in the modern period. Kate has written on some major Christian theologians of the 19th and 20th centuries and, on her leave, will try her hand at some contemporary theology.



3

Voices and Visions of Italian Americans

The enormous success of films such as *Goodfellas* and *Moonstruck* attest to the American public's current receptivity to dramatic representations of Italian-American life. Yet these popular films represent only a minimal part of the rich literary and cinematic production by and about Italian-Americans in the last twenty years. In reading essays, poetry, and short fiction, and by viewing films by or about Italian Americans, we will attempt to extend and deepen our understanding of this cultural phenomenon, to assess the extent to which particular works challenge or sustain ethnic stereotypes, and to consider why at this moment in American cultural life this particular ethnic experience stimulates a renaissance of both artists' work and public response.

Patricia Zupan (Ph.D., Indiana) was born and raised in a thriving and active multi-ethnic immigrant community in Cleveland, Ohio. Her desire to recover her cultural roots led her to study Italian literature in the United States and in Italy, where she specialized in Medieval and Renaissance literature. Currently teaching a wide variety of language and literature courses in both English and Italian, and publishing in the area of Dante and Machiavelli Studies, she has collaborated in the preparation of a major research instrument, The International Machiavelli Bibliography, and has contributed to journals such as Machiavelli Studies and Lectura Dantis. She has found in the area of Italian-American Studies a new, vital, and personal ground for discussion and research.



4

From the Seraglio to Sacramento: Images of "the other" in 19th-Century Opera and Art

The title refers to two operas which bracket the 19th century: Mozart's *Abduction from the Seraglio* (1792) and Puccini's *Girl of the Golden West* (1910).

This parenthesis marks off something not wholly new, but something peculiarly concentrated in 19th-century western European sensibility: the realization that there was a whole *other* world "out there" that didn't necessarily fit European expectations—a world at once foreign, often exotic, and perhaps even threatening. Sometimes with humor, sometimes with condescension, sometimes with delight and admiration, European artists responded to this world so different from their own.

In this course we will examine the manner in which composers and visual artists responded to this cultural challenge, and in so doing, produced some of the great masterpieces of western art.

John Hunisak, Professor of Art, began teaching the history of art at Middlebury in the fall of 1970. Although most of his research and publications have been concerned with the art (and particularly sculpture) of 19th century Europe, he is also co-author of The Art of Florence, for which he wrote the essays devoted to that city's sculpture, 1300-1600. He loves opera and maintains a full subscription at the Metropolitan.

Greg Vitercik, Assistant Professor of Music, teaches music history and theory at Middlebury College, where he is also active as an accompanist. His particular areas of specialization include the music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His first book, on the music of Felix Mendelssohn, was published in the spring of 1992; he is currently working on a study of Franz Schubert's song cycle, Die Schöne Müllerin.

